

# Kentucky Teacher

November 2001

## Schools make 'dramatic' changes after scholastic audits and reviews

By Faun S. Fishback  
Kentucky Department of Education

Perhaps the best-kept secret during last month's release of school indices on the 2000-2001 Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) is how well Kentucky's lowest-performing schools scored. The money, time and effort spent by educators to raise student achievement levels seem to have paid big dividends when students took the tests last spring.

"It appears the scholastic audits [a review and recommendation process required for the lowest-performing schools] had a significant impact," said Tom Peterson, associate commissioner for the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Leadership and School Improvement. "Many of the schools and districts that participated in the audit and implemented the recommendations for improvement led by local educators have seen dramatic change."

Once a school staff has an audit or review, Peterson said, they have a plan of action. "They have the key to make

the connection for school improvement," he explained. "It's like they've been given a road map for change and success."

Schools with index scores that placed them below the assistance line at the end of the 1998-2000 accountability cycle were divided into three categories. Schools with the lowest scores (Level 3 schools) received a scholastic audit, school improvement funds and the assistance of a specially trained "highly skilled educator." All but two of the 46 schools at this lowest-performing level showed improvement, one school by 29.9 points. (See box for details.)

Forty-eight schools were in the second-lowest scoring group, Level 2. Each one received a scholastic review and qualified for school improvement funds. Forty-one of these schools posted improved mid-cycle scores; 22 exceeded their goals for the 2001-2002 accountability cycle. (See box.)

Forty-eight Level 1 schools, those

falling just under their goals, conducted a self-review using the same assessment tool, "Standards and Indicators for School Improvement," that audit teams used in Level 2 and Level 3 schools. Forty-two of the 48 schools had midpoint accountability indices higher than their baseline scores. Scores at these 42 Level 1 schools increased an average of 5.4 points from their baselines.

Twenty-eight of the Level 1 schools exceeded their 2001-2002 accountability index by an average of 3.4 points. One school posted an increase of 10.4 points above its two-year goal.

With audit data already compiled from the low-performing schools, the focus of reviews this school year is on high-performing schools. Fifty schools that exceeded their goals during the interim accountability cycle have volunteered for reviews, Peterson said. The schools represent 15 school districts.

These voluntary reviews will look at the same nine standards: curriculum; classroom evaluation/assessment; instruction; school culture; student, family and community support; professional growth, development and evaluation; leadership; organizational structure and resources; and comprehensive and effective planning.

For more information about the scholastic audit and review process, contact Tom Peterson at (502) 564-2116 or [tpeterso@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:tpeterso@kde.state.ky.us). Audit and review documents are available on the Department of Education's Web site at [www.kentuckyschools.org/audit](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/audit).

Watch future issues of *Kentucky Teacher* for stories about how administrators and teachers implemented positive changes in their schools after receiving scholastic audit or review recommendations.

### The Impact of Scholastic Audits

#### At Level 3:

- All 46 schools at this lowest-performing level at the end of the 1998-2000 accountability cycle received scholastic audits. All but two showed improvement on Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) administered in spring 2001. Those two schools missed beating their own baselines by less than two points.
- Indices posted by the 44 improving Level 3 schools at the mid-point of this accountability cycle ranged from 1 point to 24.9 points. The average index increase for the 44 schools was 7 points.
- 20 of the 46 Level 3 schools had scores on the spring 2001 KCCT that were higher than their goals for the 2001-2002 accountability cycle. Those schools exceeded their goals by an average of 4.7 points, with one school exceeding its goal by 19.9 points.

#### At Level 2:

- Of the 48 schools in this second-lowest scoring group, 41 posted improved mid-cycle scores; 22 exceeded their goals for the 2001-2002 accountability cycle.
- Scores at the improving schools averaged 7.6 points above their baselines, with one school posting a one-year increase of 25.3 points. Level 2 schools that exceeded their two-year goal did so by an average of 7.1 points.



Photo by Rick McComb

#### No Bones About It!

Lawrence County 8th-graders Frank Spradlin and Robert Maynard study an X-ray during a practice test on the skeletal system. Their school district has a new strategy for getting parents involved in students' academic achievement. See Page 7.



# Commissioner's Comments

## *Can a school become proficient without a proficient district staff?*

By Gene Wilhoit  
Commissioner of Education

During my 13 months as your education commissioner, I've talked often about school accountability. I've written entire columns about the necessity of highly effective instruction. I've called on teachers to review and, if necessary, change the way they teach. I've done these things with my "eye on the prize": every school teaching at proficiency or beyond by 2014.

But I know that teachers and schools cannot achieve this goal on their own. They must have leadership and support from the district level. The more we delve into factors contributing to school successes and failures, the more we recognize how district-level actions – and inactions – contribute to school performance.

I'm not talking about leadership only in administrative matters, although that is certainly an important function. I'm talking about district administrators as active instructional leaders who are involved in what happens in school buildings. In my travels, I've come across several districts that stand out in that way. The Clay County district, for example, required a scholastic audit or review for every school and the district as a whole. The districtwide approach to improvement is yielding results. One year after taking action based on the audit and review teams' recommendations, Clay County is the home of one of the most-improved elementary schools in the state. Individual school gains across the district range from 3.6 to 25.3. Specific examples include Big Creek Elementary with a 19.5-point improvement; Goose Rock Elementary with a 15.1 gain; Burning Springs Elementary, up by 9.4; and Oneida Elementary, improved by 25.3!

Metcalf County is another district that volunteered for systemwide reviews. Once the results were in and analyzed, a local school board member volunteered to work one-on-one with every school council, using core content test scores, examples of student work and Kentucky's Standards and Indicators for School Improvement to focus on improving student performance. Each school council reports its progress regularly to the local board. These school councils are expanding their vision beyond paying bills and setting policies to the all-important function of meeting the instructional needs of every student. Similar actions are making a difference in Pike County as well.

Carter County district leaders are taking a close look at all of their programs and processes, identifying what works and what doesn't. With their eyes on proficiency by 2014, they are deciding what programs and "habits" they must give up to be effective instructional leaders.

There are other exciting examples of districts as instructional leaders, and more districts will be joining their ranks as test scores prove the value of doing so. The importance of the district's role is emphasized by our assessment and accountability system. In fact, starting in 2004, the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System will require an audit for any district with a school at Level 3 (the lowest-scoring category) for two consecutive cycles.

The staff in every district would do well to become intimately familiar with Kentucky's Standards and Indicators for School Improvement. The standards, posted on the department's Web site, are highlighted to emphasize key indicators that we have identified as "leverage points," factors that are common to all successful schools and districts. I think you will find these leverage points eye-opening, instructive and inspiring. I hope these tools prompt and support internal and

external discussions on what a proficient central office staff looks like and does in support of their schools' goals to reach proficiency.

As we refine the way we educate children, we are learning that focus is necessary. Our future work can be difficult, certainly, but schools and districts all around us are proving that there is reward in doing things as a unified team involving both district and school leadership.

The Standards and Indicators for School Improvement are available online at [www.kentuckyschools.org/audit](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/audit).

To respond to the commissioner on this topic, phone (502) 564-3141 or send an e-mail message to [gwillhoit@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:gwillhoit@kde.state.ky.us).

Questions about the Standards and Indicators for School Improvement or the new district standards? Contact Tom Peterson at (502) 564-2116 or [tpeterso@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:tpeterso@kde.state.ky.us).

## State board asks for more funds to get students to proficiency

The Kentucky Board of Education is asking Gov. Paul Patton and the General Assembly to increase funding over the next two years for programs that will help schools move students toward proficiency. Specifically, the board wants additional money for school districts to fund two additional instructional days, minority educator recruitment and new classroom initiatives.

Kentucky has been forced to deal with a state revenue shortfall in the

current biennium of more than \$700 million. So far, Gov. Patton has avoided cutting funding to public schools because of his strong support for education.

At the heart of the board's request for additional money is the desire to keep SEEK (Support Education Excellence in Kentucky) at its current level of \$3,066 per pupil for fiscal year 2002-2003. The board also is requesting a 1 percent increase in the

SEEK base each year of the biennium, increasing to \$3,097 per pupil in 2002-2003 and \$3,128 per pupil in fiscal year 2003-2004.

The board is asking for \$28.4 million to add two instructional days to the school calendar in 2003-2004. Another \$1.5 million would provide \$2,000 salary supplements to teachers who receive national board certification.

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# 'KRP' will forever change the way I teach!

By DeVona Hickerson  
Teacher, Spencer County Elementary

KRP! Those three letters will forever change the way I will deliver instruction to my students.

I am talking about the Kentucky Reading Project, which is a program designed to help teachers manage a balanced literacy program. It is absolutely the most beneficial professional growth opportunity I have ever experienced! I learned so many new strategies in two weeks, and I could not wait for my students to return to my classroom this year.

I am excited to have a literacy action plan developed to incorporate family literacy, Developmental Reading Assessment, literature circles, my school's adopted basal text, and explicit reading and writing strategies. These components are combined strategies to help both struggling and average readers – and even gifted readers – improve higher-level comprehension skills.

I have a renewed confidence that I can help all my students become proficient readers, which in return will add to the improvement of our school's reading test scores on the CTBS and the Kentucky Core Content Tests.



DeVona Hickerson

However, the Kentucky Reading Project is more than two weeks of project participation. Once I implement my "Action Plan," there will be follow-up sessions throughout the year with my KRP group. Professors will observe and help me celebrate my growth as an educator. The collaborative opportunities are immeasurable. The shared experience with teachers all over Kentucky has given me a support network that will, in turn, help the teachers I collaborate with at my school. We are working together to educate Kentucky's children!

There are extra incentives for participating in the KRP: graduate credit, stipend money and increased professional knowledge. I recommend this project to all teachers!

Several sites in the state host the Kentucky Reading Project. Visit [www.kentuckyliteracy.org/](http://www.kentuckyliteracy.org/) for details.

Contact DeVona Hickerson at Spencer County Elementary School at (502) 447-3260 or [dhicker@spencer.k12.ky.us](mailto:dhicker@spencer.k12.ky.us).

For direct assistance, contact Rene Matthews, reading consultant at the Department of Education, at (502) 564-2106 or [rmatthew@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:rmatthew@kde.state.ky.us).

## More About the Kentucky Reading Project

The Kentucky Reading Project is a professional development initiative for Kentucky public school elementary teachers. Its purpose is to improve student achievement and emphasize family involvement in literacy.

The project is the centerpiece of the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development: Early Childhood through Adulthood, a partnership among Kentucky's eight public universities, the Kentucky Department of Education and the National Center for Family Literacy. Each university serves as a project site. The project director at each site teams with a Department of Education regional service center consultant to plan and present the project curriculum.

Participating teachers receive several benefits, including a \$350 stipend and approximately \$200 in books and teaching materials; three hours of graduate credit; Kentucky resident tuition waiver for three hours of graduate credit; support through continued networking and on-site mentoring; and access to literacy resources. The project gives first priority to elementary teachers who apply as school teams. Individual teachers are also considered for selection as space allows. Each site can accommodate up to 35 participants.

During the summer institutes, teacher teams develop literacy action plans that they implement during the school year. Professors and regional consultants meet with participants during four follow-up sessions and visit each team twice during the year to mentor and coach teachers as they implement their plans.

Details and applications will be available after Jan. 5, 2002, from principals, regional service centers, the Internet ([www.kentuckyliteracy.org](http://www.kentuckyliteracy.org)) and the project directors at each university. The deadline for completed applications is Feb. 18, 2002. Each application must include a written recommendation from the applicant's principal.

For direct assistance, contact the appropriate project site director or regional service center consultant listed on the Web site, or contact Nawanna Privett at [nbpriv2@uky.edu](mailto:nbpriv2@uky.edu) or (859) 257-6731; or Cary Pappas at [cpappas@uky.edu](mailto:cpappas@uky.edu) or (859) 257-6118.

## State Board

### Continued from Page 2

The board's request includes funding for these priorities:

- a stepped-up minority educator recruitment program;
- initiatives to improve reading skills at all levels;
- programs to close the achievement gap between black and white students;
- school technology and data collection;
- scholastic audits;
- programs for students with limited English proficiency;

- teacher recruitment and retention;
- an arts and humanities pilot program;
- expansion of community education programs.

The budget request would add nearly \$290 million to the department's \$2.8 billion budget over the 2002-2004 biennium. It now will be forwarded to the governor and the Legislative Research Commission for consideration.



Photo by Rick McComb

Spencer County Elementary teacher DeVona Hickerson uses strategies she learned in the Kentucky Reading Project to help student Jennifer Hall increase her reading skills. Hickerson says her participation in the project "will forever change the way I will deliver instruction to my students."



## Three educators win unexpected honors – and unrestricted cash

It's not every day that unexpected visitors drop by to offer congratulations and a \$25,000 spend-any-way-you-want prize.

That's why Oct. 17 was a red-letter day for three Kentucky educators: Kirk Lattimore at Crosby Middle School in Jefferson County, Karen Branham at Glasgow (Independent) High School, and Sheila Duncan at Boyd County High. On that day, Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit and Milken Senior Vice President for Education Thomas Boysen came to their schools to announce that the three educators had won the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award.

The national program gives recognition and cash rewards to elementary and secondary school teachers, principals and other education professionals. The foundation started giving the awards in 1987, and Kentucky joined the program in 1993. This year's awards, sometimes called education's "academy award" or "hall of fame," went to 120 educators from 44 states.

At the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in Los Angeles next June, each winner will receive a check for \$25,000. There are no restrictions on the use of the award.

For details about the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award, contact Donna Melton at (502) 564-3421 or [dmelton@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:dmelton@kde.state.ky.us).



**Sheila Duncan**  
Spanish Teacher,  
Boyd County High School

- Eight years in the education profession
- Bachelor's degree in social work and Spanish from Murray State University; master's in secondary education from Morehead State University
- Kentucky School Boards Association PEAK Award, 1999 (for her work with AVID, a program to motivate at-risk students to recognize their own potential)
- Spanish instructor for Kentucky Virtual High School and Ashland Community College
- 1999 Boyd County High School Teacher of the Year; 2000 Boyd County Teacher of the Year (Secondary)

*"Sheila Duncan makes a big difference in the lives of underachieving students. ... She works to motivate them. She teaches note taking, study skills and other things that will help them be successful. She is personally responsible for several students going to college who otherwise wouldn't have even thought about it."*

James Harper, assistant superintendent of Boyd County Schools



**Kirk Lattimore**  
Principal,  
Crosby Middle School  
Jefferson County

- 14 years in the education profession
- Bachelor's degree in biology from Hampton University; master's in secondary education from University of Louisville; doctoral candidate at University of Louisville
- 1998 Jefferson County High School Assistant Principal of the Year
- Member, National Science Foundation Development/Materials Panel, 1995
- PNC Bank/WHAS Teacher ExCEL Award, 1995

*"Kirk aspires and inspires. He has had a tremendous impact on the district and its students. He is constantly thinking of new and innovative ways to enhance student achievement. He emits a positive 'can do' attitude about leadership and the potential of children."*

Glenn Baete, principal of Doss High School and Lattimore's professional colleague



**Karen Branham**  
Science Teacher,  
Glasgow High School

- 17 years in the teaching profession
- Bachelor's degree in physical education and science from University of California at Davis; master's in secondary education from Western Kentucky University
- 2001 Kentucky Outstanding Teacher Award from Murray State University
- California League of Middle Schools' Educator of the Year, 1993
- One of five national Catalyst Award winners for innovation in science teaching from the Chemical Manufacturer's Association, 1995

*"Karen demonstrates excellence in teaching by making her classes fun and interesting. She has high expectations for herself as well as her students. In her commitment to excellence, she developed a new course that filled the gaps in our science department. That course is now a graduation requirement."*

Tommy L. Elliott, principal of Glasgow High School

# Kentucky's Class of 2014:

# A Strong Start in Social Studies

When teacher Linda Cannon wanted her entry-level primary students at the Kentucky School for the Deaf to learn about Africa, one of the first orders of business was vocabulary. Student David Gonzalez learned to sign “rhinoceros” on his way to discovering more about the land, animals, people and culture of Africa.

David and his classmates – each a potential member of Kentucky’s high school graduating class of 2014 – also experienced a native African food tasting party and a demonstration of African music by a native of Togo, Africa. Kentucky Arts Council artist-in-residence Yolantha Pace is getting

students involved in African art, music and dance.

All of these experiences relate to social studies expectations 2.16, 2.17 and 2.19 outlined in the Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools. The students are getting off to a good start in meeting these and other social studies requirements:

**Primary:** Students will recognize language, music, art, dress, food, literature and folktales as elements of culture. They will use tools such as maps, globes, charts, graphs and compasses to understand surroundings.

**Grade 5:** Students will understand how culture in the United States has

been influenced by languages, literature, arts, beliefs and behaviors of diverse groups. Students will examine social interactions among diverse groups.

**Grade 8:** Students will analyze social interactions among diverse groups and individuals in United States history. Students will explore reasons behind patterns of human settlement across the United States that resulted in the diverse cultures of the United States.

**High School:** Students will explore how people and cultures of many countries, races and religious traditions have contributed to the American experience. Students will

explore ways in which belief systems, knowledge, technology and behavioral patterns define cultures and help to explain historical perspectives and events.

For more about what Kentucky students are learning, refer to “Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools.” The document is available free of charge online (go to [www.kentuckyschools.org](http://www.kentuckyschools.org) and select “Program of Studies”). It is also available for purchase from the KDE Bookstore. Select “Bookstore” on the department’s Web site or contact Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421 or [wnewton@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:wnewton@kde.state.ky.us).



Photo by Rick McComb

# Where can I learn to troubleshoot computer problems?

Welcome back to “New to the 'Net,” a professional development series for teachers who want to use technology effectively for teaching and learning. In this lesson, learn some starting points for “troubleshooting” – identifying and overcoming some of those little technical glitches that come up when you use technology.

To locate this lesson online, go to the Kentucky Department of Education's home page ([www.kentuckyschools.org](http://www.kentuckyschools.org)) and click on the mascot “Newt” (or directly to [www.kentuckyschools.org/newt](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/newt)), then click on “Lesson 2.3.”

## Lesson 2.3

Have you ever been bewildered by technology that just won't work the way you think it's supposed to? When you've asked for technology help, have you been confused by the “techno-jargon” or “geek-talk” you hear? Have you been unable to get technical help as quickly as you want it?

If so, you may benefit from learning some technology troubleshooting techniques. Knowing a few basics for identifying and fixing a problem can save a lot of time and frustration!

The Kentucky Education Technology System's chief troubleshooter is Bill Heise. He manages the KETS Help Desk, which supports KETS-compliant technology statewide. The procedure for getting Help Desk assistance is to contact your school and district technology coordinator or technical points of contact. But even before you do that, Heise recommends that you take these troubleshooting steps:

- Check the power supply and connections to be sure that electrical power is reaching the computer.
- Be sure that all cords and cables (especially mouse and keyboard cables) are securely attached and connected to the proper ports.
- If you are using an Intel computer on the KETS network, make sure the green or amber light on the network card (on the back of the computer) is on.

If those things check out and you still can't identify or solve the problem, it's time to ask for help from your school technology coordinator or technology resource teacher, your district technology coordinator or – if your school has a Student Technology Leadership Program – a tech-savvy student. Before you call, be ready to give these resource people certain facts:

- The “platform” or kind of computer you are using. Is it an Intel machine or a Macintosh?
- The operating system. Is it Windows 95, Windows 98 or Windows 2000? If you are using a Mac, what is the “OS” number? (To find out, click on your desktop, pull down the menu under the Apple logo and select “About This Computer.”)
- If your problem concerns the Internet, which browser are you using (Internet Explorer or Netscape)? Which

version or edition (for example, Netscape 4.75)?

- If your problem concerns e-mail, what software are you using (Microsoft Exchange or Microsoft Outlook 97, 98 or 2000)?

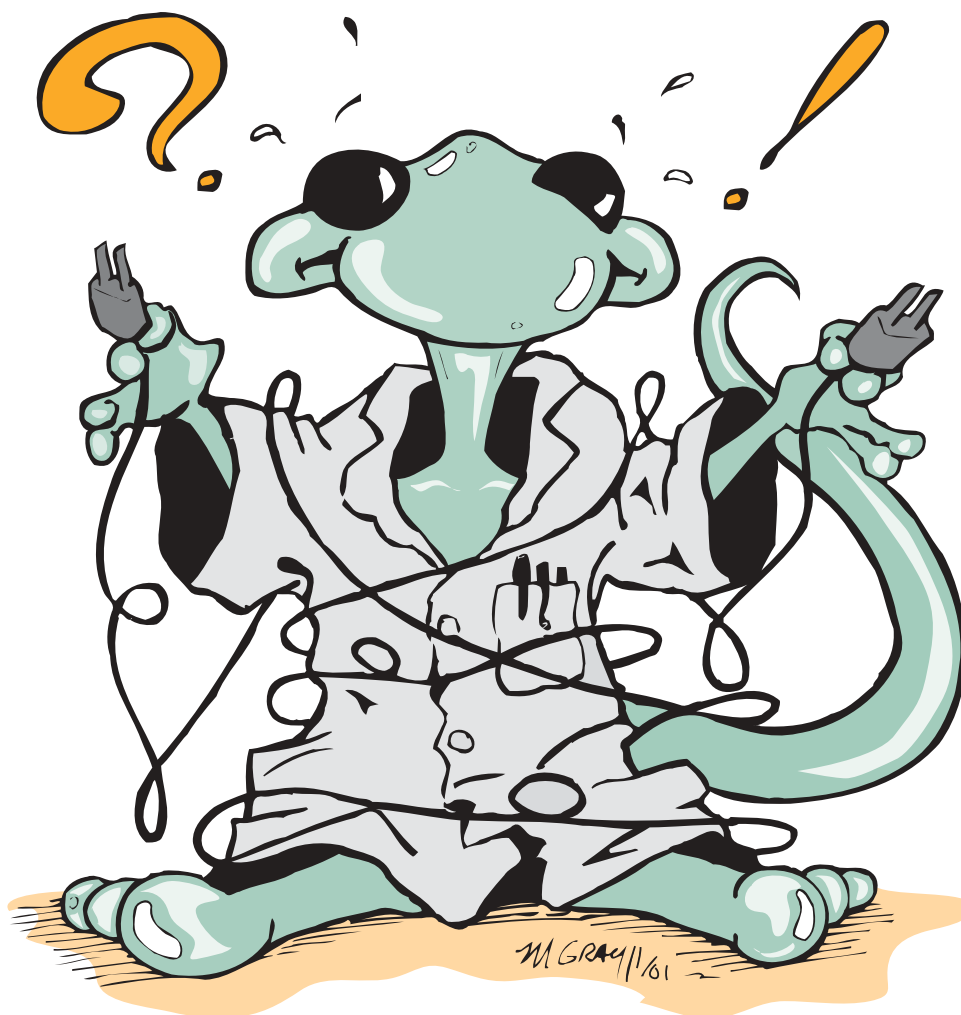
- If your problem concerns other software, what product and version? Microsoft Office 97, 98 or 2000ME? ClarisWorks? Appleworks 5.0?

The more comfortable you become with technology, the more comfortable you're likely to become with troubleshooting. Many sites on the Web offer online help with troubleshooting. You'll find direct links to several of those sites when you visit the online version of this lesson. For KETS-specific troubleshooting help and how-to information, go to the Department of Education Help Desk Online ([www.kentuckyschools.org/helpdesk](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/helpdesk))

and click on “Frequently Asked Questions” and “Links.”

Editor's Note: “New to the 'Net” started in the August 2000 issue of *Kentucky Teacher*. If you need copies of printed lessons, go to [www.kentuckyschools.org/newt](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/newt) and click on the link to each *Kentucky Teacher* issue or send a request to *Kentucky Teacher*, 1914 Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; [kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us).

Susan Lancaster of the Department of Education's Division of School Instructional Technology is the mentor for this year's “New to the 'Net” series. E-mail your questions, comments and ideas to her at [slancast@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:slancast@kde.state.ky.us) (or through the KETS global list), or phone her at (502) 564-7168, extension 4542.



### The Continuing Adventures of Newt and MarcoPolo

In last month's lesson, Newt met MarcoPolo, a Web portal for Internet-based content for the classroom. Newt has discovered that MarcoPolo has a search engine that can be a real boon to teachers looking for effective instructional Web sites.

The MarcoPolo Search Engine makes it easy to cull MarcoPolo-reviewed educational material from all of the portal's partner and partner-reviewed sites. Search by keyword or discipline, or browse by selecting “Browse Subjects” or “Browse Keywords.” General search engines will often generate hundreds of resources, many of which are irrelevant to education. The MarcoPolo Search Engine will produce results specifically cataloged and coded for teacher use in the classroom.

To use this resource, click the “MarcoPolo Search” icon in the upper-right corner of the MarcoPolo home page: <http://marcopolo.worldcom.com>.

# Lawrence County communicates to make expectations clear to students and parents

**By Toni V. Armstrong**  
Director of Curriculum  
Lawrence County Public Schools



**Toni Armstrong**

What are children learning in Lawrence County classrooms? Teachers spent many hours during the 2000-01 school year preparing course syllabi to deliver to parents at the beginning of the 2001-2002 school year. Each syllabus gives parents a course description; an outline of what students need to know and be able to do by the time the course ends; a list of instructional materials; instructional strategies; course requirements; and an overview of how teachers evaluate student work. Here in Lawrence County, we think communicating student expectations to parents is a key to holding students to high standards.

Additionally, groups of content-area teachers representing all district schools used the first part of their summer to address curriculum transition issues: students moving from level to level, grade to grade and school to school. Keeping in mind how students demonstrate mastery of state and local standards in each course, teachers clarified each curriculum statement (primary through grade 12) in the Lawrence County curriculum.

Most teachers found that participating in the summer workshop was invaluable. Dialogue among teachers at all levels – primary, intermediate, middle and high school – has helped fill gaps in instruction and created a renewed commitment to higher standards of student performance.

Middle-level science teacher Rita Jane Shelton summed it up: “Once this phase of curriculum development is complete, the transitions will be

smoother, and we will see progress in student achievement.”

To continue this valuable process of fine-tuning the district curriculum, summer workshop participants have suggested a method of sharing their experiences with teachers who were unable to participate in this phase of alignment. Content-area teachers will develop content-specific professional development sharing how invaluable this process has been and the usefulness of the refined document.

Curriculum alignment is a never-ending process that the Lawrence

County Board of Education and the Lawrence County staff take seriously. With a district-facilitated process that began with consolidated planning in 1998 at each district school, the district curriculum is now standards-based, aligned with “The Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools” and “Kentucky Core Content for Assessment.”

This latest refinement of addressing transition issues will enable teachers to ensure that students make continuous progress and reach high levels of achievement. The communication of student

expectations through published course syllabi will further support these goals. Communication is evidence of our commitment to improving education in Lawrence County schools.

For details about this district’s curriculum alignment process and the initiative for communicating with parents, contact Toni V. Armstrong at (606) 638-9671 or by e-mail through the KETS global list or [tarmstro@lawrence.k12.ky.us](mailto:tarmstro@lawrence.k12.ky.us).



Photo by Rick McComb

Lawrence County High School teacher Christy Moore guides student Audrey Dials and her mother Kim Dials through an Algebra I course syllabus. Teachers throughout the district have outlined for parents what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they complete each class. The district considers this communication with parents to be a key to holding students to high standards.

# IGPs: Individual Graduation Plans

In four districts, 'Power Pact' strategy gives 8th-graders a running start on planning ahead

Madison students 'MAP' the future; Montgomery teachers help students and their parents consider career paths

By Joy Barr  
Kentucky Department of Education

What happens when four schools team up with community partners to provide individual graduation plans for 8th-graders? They form a pact – a Power Pact.

Most students give little thought to choosing a career, at least until high school. But that's changing, thanks to Power Pact, a program supported by federal GEAR UP grant funds at schools in Breckinridge, LaRue and Meade counties and the Elizabethtown Independent district. Power Pact is a cooperative effort of the four school districts and their community partners, including Kentucky Utilities Company, the Meade County and Nolin rural electric cooperatives, Elizabethtown Community College, and the schools' family resource and youth services centers.

The mission of GEAR UP is to increase the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Power Pact brings 8th-grade students, their parents, educators and community partners together to discuss the future and how to prepare for it. Leona Cannady, Meade County's GEAR UP coordinator based at Stuart Pepper Middle School, heads up the Power Pact effort for that school.

"Power Pact is designed to help students make a smooth transition into high school," Cannady said. Justin Dameron, one of last year's participating 8th-graders at Stuart Pepper Middle, agreed. "I would have gotten to high school and not known what classes to take," he said. "It would have been much harder to get the classes I needed without Power Pact."

Students and parents explore career options and start planning academically and financially for high school and beyond. They will "revisit" those plans every spring throughout high school, updating and making changes as necessary.

Kentucky's teachers received Power Pact facilitation training from Oklahoma City teachers who have seen the program succeed over the past five years. Oklahoma City reported a 98 percent parent participation rate in the program's first year plus a measurable rise in the number of students taking high-level mathematics and science courses.

In Kentucky's four Power Pact districts, each 8th-grade student comes up with an individual graduation plan, learning in the process how to set goals based on career and academic interests. Students take a career interest inventory that places them in one of 14 Kentucky career clusters, which are broad areas that correlate to specific jobs. They also establish relationships with community mentors.

Students and their parents meet with teachers in the spring to review a planning document that outlines the four years in high school, from graduation requirements to individual career assessment results and course options. Educators in the four Power Pact districts report that students in the program tend to choose more challenging coursework.

Next the students and their parents talk with postsecondary education representatives and community employers for college and career planning advice. In the final step, they talk with community partners about financial planning for college, career clusters and services available from family resource centers.

Parents seem to appreciate the Power Pact sessions. "I think the program is a wonderful idea," one parent said. "There was nothing like this when I was in school."

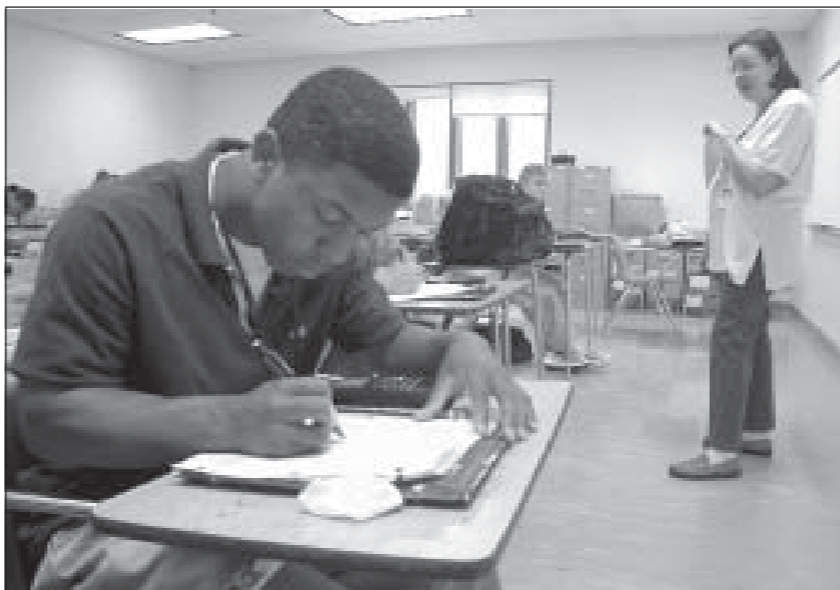
Cannady, the GEAR UP coordinator at Stuart Pepper Middle School, attributes the program's success to the dedication of educators. "The four school districts work so hard to make the program a success," she said. "It's all about the children."

For more information about Power Pact, contact Leona Cannady at (270) 422-7530 or lcannady@meade.k12.ky.us (or through the KETS global list).

For more information about GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs), visit [www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/gearup/](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/gearup/) on the Internet.



Teacher Frank Smith (left) was a Power Pact advisor for the Mitcham family during the 2000-01 school year. Parents Nancy and Ed Mitcham joined son Alex, then an 8th-grader, to plan Alex's transition from Stuart Pepper Middle School to Meade County High.



Madison Southern High School student Malachi Maxwell practices budgeting strategies during a Madison Advisory Program session with advisor Linda Mullins. The small-group sessions help students learn academic and life skills they will need for the future.

Photo by Rick McComb

## About Individual Graduation Plans

Beginning with the Class of 2002, each Kentucky high school student must complete an individual graduation plan (IGP). The four-year curricular plan emphasizes career development and specifically addresses Vocational Studies Academic Expectations 2.36 and 2.38.

Students develop the IGP prior to entering high school. The IGP sets learning goals and helps students decide which high school programs and courses will help them make a successful transition to college, vocational/technical school, the work force or the military.

IGPs encourage students and their parents to work with teachers and counselors as they consider educational and career goals and plan how best to achieve them. The plans can be changed or revised as students progress and as goals change.

Complete information about Kentucky's high school graduation requirements is available online at [www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/high/school\\_grad\\_requirements.asp](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/high/school_grad_requirements.asp).

Photo by Rick McComb

By Faun S. Fishback  
Kentucky Department of Education

Madison Southern senior Laura Abney knows she has the opportunity every two weeks to fine-tune her high school career and revise plans for her future. Most importantly, she knows she's not alone in the task.

Laura and 12 other seniors have been meeting twice a month for nearly four years with French and drama teacher Kathie Bettler as part of the Madison Advisory Program (MAP). During that time, these students have come to know and depend on each other.

MAP is a very special – almost sacred – advisor/advisee program at the Madison County school, says Principal Barbara Disney. "In MAP, students are one of no more than 15, instead of one out of 825," she said. "They know someone is interested in their success, and they respond. MAP is helping keep our dropout and retention rates low."

Science teacher and head sophomore advisor Kathleen Jones also sees value in the small MAP groups. "The program really keeps students from falling through the cracks," she said. "They know at least one teacher is looking out for them, telling them 'I believe in you.'"

MAP sessions offer students the chance to gain study and test-taking skills. In fact, students gather in their MAP groups to take the Kentucky Core Content Tests. MAP sessions also teach life skills. For example, students learn to apply for jobs, explore postsecondary options, and write and update their resumes. Seniors do periodic checks of their transcripts.

"I think getting to graduation would have been more difficult without the organization MAP gives students," said Abney, the Madison Southern senior, "without a place to get together with a teacher and figure out what I need to do for the future."

The Madison Southern advisor/

advisee program fulfills a state mandate that requires students to complete an individual graduation plan (IGP) that incorporates emphasis on career development before they are awarded a diploma. The requirement becomes effective with this year's seniors, the Class of 2002. (See box on this page.)

Students take MAP seriously, said counselor Kathy Vockery. Throughout the school's eight years of providing an advisor/advisee program, students have complained when activities weren't on target or when an advisor wasn't helpful. "This type of program has to be beneficial for students," she added.

## Getting started

Because the IGP is a four-year curricular plan, work on students' individual graduation plans starts in middle school. At McNabb Middle School in Montgomery County, students explore the 14 career paths through a variety of classroom activities. Students take a nationally normed assessment to discover their areas of interest and ability.

Career planning intensifies in the second semester of the 8th-grade year, said McNabb counselor Gay Warren. She and counselors at Montgomery County High work with small groups of 8th-graders and their parents three or four times before the more than 300 students complete their IGPs and their 9th-grade class schedules. Warren says working on both the IGPs and class schedules at the same time helps get parents involved.

Counselors also do career and academic advising during a curriculum fair for 8th-graders. The fair provides information to students and parents about high school core content, elective classes and extracurricular activities, she added.

The McNabb Middle program is in

its fourth year. "I think our 8th-graders are better equipped for high school," Warren said. "We're not hearing, 'We didn't know,' from parents or students. They know all the requirements. Students know their career interests. They are making informed decisions about their futures."

## Staying the course

Parents continue to be an important ingredient of the IGP in high school, said Disney, the principal at Madison Southern. Although parent involvement may be the "weakest link" of MAP, the school's advisory program, she says advisors are doing their part to keep parents informed and active participants in their children's education.

The faculty stays in regular contact with parents through phone calls, written messages and printed materials about MAP and other school programs. E-mail has become an effective communication tool for reaching parents, Disney added.

The Class of 2002 will be the second MAP group for many Madison Southern teachers. "You have the same group of students for four years, and when you call their names at graduation, it's really rewarding," said Jones, the head sophomore advisor. "When my first group graduated, it really moved me. After three years, they still check with me and let me know how they're doing."

For more information about the McNabb Middle School IGP program, contact school counselor Gay Warren at (859) 497-8770 or [gelliott@montgomery.k12.ky.us](mailto:gelliott@montgomery.k12.ky.us). To learn more about MAP at Madison Southern, contact counselor Kathy Vockery at (859) 986-8424 or [kvockery@madison.k12.ky.us](mailto:kvockery@madison.k12.ky.us).

# From Rest Stop to Launching Pad

**National commission chaired by Kentucky governor urges nation's high schools to beef up the senior year: more college preparation, new alternatives, better linkages between all levels of learning**

The problems of America's high school seniors go deeper than "senioritis" and require a comprehensive remedy involving all levels of education, from preschool to postsecondary education. So states

"Just 44 percent of our high school students take a demanding academic program; the other 30 million are being prepared for a future that has already vanished, in courses of study that lack rigor and coherence," the report says.

The report applauds the 18 states, including Kentucky, in which P-16 councils work to increase student access to postsecondary education, improve student success and align curriculum. It calls on more states to



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Division of Creative Services

Kentucky Gov. Paul Patton greeted students during a recent visit to Dunbar High School in Fayette County. Patton is chairman of the National Commission on the High School Senior Year. The commission's final report, released in October, asserts that problems in U.S. high schools go beyond "senioritis" and that, in general, U.S. high schools are not preparing enough students for postsecondary learning or careers after college.

"Raising Our Sights: No High School Senior Left Behind," the final report of the National Commission on the High School Senior Year. Kentucky Gov. Paul E. Patton chairs the commission.

A central tenet of the report, released Oct. 4, is that new demands of the economy now require all U.S. students to take at least two additional years of formal education and training after high school. However, the report states, high school is not preparing enough students for postsecondary learning or careers after college, and the United States is slipping behind other nations as the world leader in the percentage of young people who graduate from college.

The report calls on the nation to establish more (and more rigorous) alternatives to the traditional classroom-centered senior year. It calls on states, schools and districts to take the following steps to ensure that more students are ready for postsecondary education:

- Make a "college-preparatory-like" curriculum the default learning track for all, with states requiring that school districts obtain parental permission before assigning high school students to lower-level courses.
- Invest in high-quality early childhood education and teacher preparation programs to raise student achievement and prepare students for rigorous high school work.

launch such councils and expand efforts to align standards for high school promotion and graduation, college admission and enrollment in courses.

The National Commission on the High School Senior Year is a public/private partnership between The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, which is acting as the coordinating institution, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

To learn more about the commission's work, read a summary of its findings or order the complete report, visit [www.commissiononthehighschoolsenioryear.org](http://www.commissiononthehighschoolsenioryear.org) on the Internet.

## The Findings

**A Summary of Conclusions of the National Commission on the High School Senior Year October 2001**

1. A high school diploma, earned by taking non-college-preparatory classes, will leave too many graduates trapped in low-paying jobs with unpromising futures.

2. The tyranny of low expectations devastates life chances for many students.

3. Each part of the education system seems to operate in isolation from every other part – elementary, middle and secondary schools rarely communicate with one another about educational goals and purposes, and K-12 rarely collaborates with either postsecondary education or with the world of work.

4. The high school senior year too often represents a lost opportunity to link students with either postsecondary studies or work.

5. Students receive little guidance about opportunities and requirements for continued study or work.

6. Assessment systems are often ill-timed.

7. Improving the professional lives of teachers is a prime consideration in improving the transition from high school to work and postsecondary education.

Individually each of these problems – shifting economies, low expectations, poor alignment, lack of motivation, inadequate counseling, ill-timed assessments and insufficient professional development for teachers – create a formidable barrier to students' successful transition from high school into the world of college, employment and adulthood. The United States desperately needs to seize the lost opportunity of the senior year. The need is immediate. The goal is important. The time to act has arrived.

# Montgomery students have a farm, ee-i-ee-i-o!

With a moo-moo here and a neigh-neigh there,  
this district makes 'field experience' a daily event

By Joy Barr  
Kentucky Department of Education

The autumn sun was shining, the air was crisp and the leaves were changing color. In that postcard setting, students from Montgomery County High School were learning to groom horses, raise tobacco and harvest fish.

Their classroom was the Chenault Agriculture Center, a farm about two miles down the road from Montgomery County High School. This agriculture learning facility gives students hands-on experience working on a farm. The school district developed the center to provide a unique and motivational environment for learning about agriculture and conservation of natural resources.

Joe Myers, who manages the farm, coordinates activities that range from a kindergarten class field trip to daily classes for equine and animal science students.

"We have an exceptional program here serving a great number of students," Myers said. "We feel privileged to have this wonderful facility for all of Montgomery County."

Myers is one of the five vocational agriculture staff members at the high school, but he devotes much of his time to the center. Superintendent Daniel Freeman, Principal Shannon White and agriculture department head Terry Ginter have played key roles in developing the center.

Plans for the center began in 1993, through the foresight and planning of some of the county's educators and agriculture leaders. In the late 1970s, the Chenault family established a trust fund to be used by the Montgomery County Board of Education exclusively for teaching the art and science of agriculture. An advisory council of educators and agriculture leaders determines how to use the funds to meet the needs of agriculture students. The first use of the funds was for the construction of a new vocational



Chanel Wilson grooms "Elli," a 26-year-old Appaloosa, at Chenault Agriculture Center, a farm owned by Montgomery County Public Schools. The center provides learning experiences for students at all grade levels.

Photo by Rick McComb

agriculture department at the high school. After completion of the building, the advisory council began the search for a site that could be a learning resource for all grade levels in the county.

In 1997, the district used trust fund proceeds to buy a 174-acre farm. Extensive work was necessary to transform the farm into the learning center it is today, but the work became a teaching tool as students in carpentry and electricity classes helped with the renovation and maintenance.

"It is exciting to see the opportunities the center will provide to teach the core content for various subjects through actual hands-on activities, field trips and class projects," Myers said. "All schools in the district can benefit from the services of the agriculture center."

The high school operates the farm as a learning resource for all grade

levels. Elementary, middle and high school students go to the farm for specific learning activities designed by teachers in all content areas. Electricity classes, carpentry, animal science, biology and journalism are among the many classes that benefit. The center demonstrates that science, mathematics, English and agriculture have an interdisciplinary relationship and that learning the "basics" can be enhanced in varied, relevant and meaningful ways.

"It is easy for teachers to rely only on textbooks or videos, but this farm gives a valuable resource for students to apply academic and technical skills to real-world situations that they will encounter in the workplace," farm manager Myers said.

Alicia Dyer, a senior taking an equine class, says coming to the center is much more motivating than reading from the textbook. "Being able to

touch and feel a horse has just been great," she said.

Amber Warren, a junior, loves working with the horses. She has shown horses for 4-H and likes learning more about the farm's two horses, Elli and Bird. "There is just so much here for us to experience and learn about," she said.

Students are gaining valuable life skills as they learn about the center's 50 head of beef cattle, two mares and 100 catfish. Students have learned about artificial insemination, embryo transplantation and some basic veterinary skills. They have seen the birth of a calf. They have also learned about farm safety, land judging and growing crops such as tobacco and alfalfa.

The potential appears to be unlimited as the center extends into other areas, including aquaculture, tobacco production, nursery stock production, apple orchard management, hay production, wheat and corn production, sheep production and vegetable gardening.

A matching grant with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service helped the center obtain some needed equipment. Myers reports that area businesses and organizations have been extremely supportive. Several civic organizations have used the center's facilities for meetings and events.

Eventually, the high school's agriculture education staff would like to move all Vocational Agriculture Department activities to the Chenault Agriculture Center.

For more information about the center, contact Joe Myers at (859) 585-1050 or [jmyers@montgomery.k12.ky.us](mailto:jmyers@montgomery.k12.ky.us) (or through the KETS global list).

# School gets freshmen off to a good start to increase the chances they'll graduate

By Wayne Dominick  
Franklin County Public Schools

*This article first appeared in the Frankfort State Journal and is reprinted with permission. Wayne Dominick is the district's communications coordinator and a member of the Kentucky School Public Relations Association.*

Most teachers will tell you that the most frustrating situation they face is knowing that a student can succeed but doesn't. For many of these students, getting off to a good start at a critical time can make the difference.

That's the idea behind the Freshman Academy at Franklin County's Western Hills High School.

"Our freshman retention rate was just way too high," said counselor Greg Roush, referring to the number of freshmen who did not move on to the sophomore year. Roush and others at Western Hills knew something had to be done to help these students succeed.

Working on a committee with other teachers and parents, Roush investigated programs in other schools. "We visited Henry County and Oldham County to see what they were doing and talked to people from other schools," Roush said.

What the committee brought to the school-based decision making council was a program that combined several ideas that committee members thought would work at Western Hills.

"Some of the things we saw just weren't possible because of space and time constraints," Roush explained. "What we came up with was something we thought we could do and would make a difference for the students."

The first step was to identify the students who would qualify as candidates for the Freshman Academy. Roush turned to Bondurant Middle School counselor Kate Higgs for help.

"We were looking for students who

had shown they were capable of academic success but, for whatever reason, hadn't done well," Higgs explained. "Most of these students just weren't motivated and, as a result, often became problems in the classroom."

academy would help their children make it through the freshman year."

The 18 students in the academy spend their school days together, all taking the same courses at the same times. Instead of the students moving from class to class, the teachers come

the school between classes, they have more freedom in the class. Also, the students take more breaks than other students do, something Western Hills Principal Chrissy Jones sees as important for the academy students.

"Most of these kids need to get up and move around a lot. That would be very disruptive in most classes," she said.

"The approach to teaching here is a little different," explained Matt Albertson, who teaches freshman biology in the academy. "We have a more relaxed atmosphere in class. The smaller class size also allows for more one-on-one teaching."

Another difference in the academy is the elective course the students take. Their first-period class, taught by Lorrie Fraley and Bryan Edwards, deals with character education and how to be academically successful.

"We do a lot with study skills, time management and different approaches to learning," Fraley said. "We try to get each day off to a good start."

A good start is exactly what academy students need, said Garry Jackson, the district's director of secondary curriculum and instruction. "Study after study has shown that most students who drop out of high school had trouble making the transition during freshman year," Jackson said. "They got by in middle school but have trouble adjusting to high school. By helping these kids from the start, we're increasing the chances that they'll stay in school and graduate."



Hope Broughton, Cheryl Sexton and Dustie Standifur complete a writing assignment at Western Hills High School in Franklin County. The three are among 18 students participating in the school's Freshman Academy, a program designed to lower 9th-grade retention rates and increase the chances that capable but formerly underachieving students will stay in school and graduate.

Once Roush had a list of candidates, his next step was to contact parents and find out if there was interest in the program.

"I didn't have a single parent tell me no," he said. "They all thought the

to the academy. During the second semester, Roush said, the students will have opportunities to take electives beyond the academy setting.

While the academy students don't have as much freedom to move about

For more information, contact Greg Roush at (502) 875-8400 or [groush@franklin.k12.ky.us](mailto:groush@franklin.k12.ky.us) (or through the KETS global list).

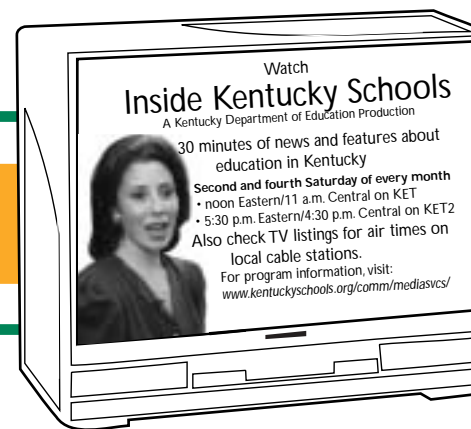
# Showcases will preview instructional resources

A series of showcases from December through February will give Kentucky educators an opportunity to preview state-recommended and supplementary instructional resources. Representatives of educational publishers will display their printed and electronic products in science and other content areas.

District textbook coordinators may attend 30-minute regional meetings in conjunction with some showcases.

The showcase schedule includes these 2001-2002 dates and locations:

- Dec. 11 – Executive Inn, Louisville, 3:30-6 p.m. EST
  - Jan. 15 – James Madison Middle School, Madisonville, 4-6:30 p.m. CST; district textbook coordinators meeting 4:30-5 p.m.
  - Jan. 16 – Central Office Technology Center, McCracken County Schools, Paducah, 4-6:30 p.m. CST
  - Jan. 22 – College View Middle School, Owensboro, 4-6:30 p.m. CST
  - Jan. 24 – Greenwood High School, Bowling Green, 4-6:30 p.m. CST; district textbook coordinators meeting 4:30-5 p.m.
  - Jan. 29 – Rowan County High School, Morehead, 4-6:30 p.m. EST; district textbook coordinators meeting 4:30-5 p.m.
  - Jan. 30 – Johnson Central High School, Paintsville, 4-6:30 p.m. EST
  - Feb. 5 – Nelson County High School, Bardstown, 4-6:30 p.m. EST
  - Feb. 7 – Bates Creek High School, Lexington, 4-6:30 p.m. EST; district textbook coordinators meeting 4:30-5 p.m.
  - Feb. 11 – Carroll County High School, Carrollton, 4-6:30 p.m. EST
  - Feb. 12 – River Ridge Elementary School, Villa Hills, 4-6:30 p.m. EST; district textbook coordinators meeting 4:30-5 p.m.
  - Feb. 20 – Pulaski County High School, Somerset, 4-6:30 p.m. EST; district textbook coordinators meeting 4:30-5 p.m.
  - Feb. 21 – Lynn Camp High School, Barbourville, 4-6:30 p.m. EST
  - Feb. 25 – Hazard Community College, Hazard, 4-6:30 p.m. EST; district textbook coordinators meeting 3-3:30 p.m.
  - Feb. 26 – Pike County Central High School, Pikeville, 4-6:30 p.m. EST
- For more information, contact Martha R. Francis at (502) 564-7056 or mfrancis@kde.state.ky.us.



## Kentucky Virtual High School News Spring semester PD for teachers will start Jan. 14

The Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS) spring 2002 professional development courses for teachers will begin Jan. 14. These fee-based, online courses are accessible to teachers anywhere, anytime, any place via Internet-connected computer.

Eight courses are available:

- Using Microsoft PowerPoint Across the Curriculum
- Engaging Students in Reading With the World Wide Web
- The Science Classroom and Technology Integration
- The Elementary Math Classroom and Technology Integration
- The One-, Two-, Too Few Computer Classroom
- Introduction to Online Teaching and Learning
- Using the Online Stock Market Game in Your Classroom
- Principal Selection Training for SBDM Council Members

Course descriptions and web-based registration, plus information about cost, professional development credit, intended audience and grade level, will be available online starting Dec. 1 on the KVHS web page at [www.kvhs.org](http://www.kvhs.org).

For more information, contact Bob Fortney, at [bfortney@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:bfortney@kde.state.ky.us) or toll free at (866) 432-0008.

## Scholarships make AP courses accessible to all

Thanks to a new, three-year federal grant, Kentucky Virtual High School can offer scholarships that make Advanced Placement (AP) courses available online to students who otherwise may not have access to them.

During the semester beginning in January 2002, KVHS will offer 15 online courses, including half-credit courses in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and U.S. government and politics. Students may apply online now for scholarships to cover tuition for spring-semester courses and for courses that will begin next fall. Tuition rates are \$275 per half-credit course and \$500 per full-credit course.

The AP program, administered by the national College Board, provides opportunities to take college-level courses while still in high school. Students who take AP courses in high school take examinations that can qualify them for Kentucky's Commonwealth Diploma. They may also qualify to skip entry-level courses when they enter college.

KVHS offers 15 AP courses, all taught by certified Kentucky teachers. Local high schools award course credits. KVHS also serves middle school students, mostly with mathematics courses, and provides professional development opportunities for teachers.

To expand access to AP courses and the Commonwealth Diploma, KVHS gives minority and low-income students first priority for AP scholarships.

For more information about KVHS and to apply for scholarships, visit [www.kvhs.org](http://www.kvhs.org) on the Internet or contact Terri DeYong at (502) 564-4772, (866) 432-0008 or [tdeyong@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:tdeyong@kde.state.ky.us) (or through the KETS global list).

## Talk to us!

Teachers: *Kentucky Teacher* wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.



E-mail [kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us)



Phone (502) 564-3421 or (800) 533-5372  
(toll free in Kentucky)



Fax (502) 564-6470



Write *Kentucky Teacher*  
1914 Capital Plaza Tower  
500 Mero St.  
Frankfort, KY 40601

## Science Center reaches students statewide

The Louisville Science Center is full of exhibits and hands-on activities that make science come alive. Recognizing that not all student groups can get to Louisville to visit the center, this not-for-profit institution offers two options:

- **Distance Learning through the Kentucky TeleLinking Network (KTLN)** - Teachers and students can go to their nearest KTLN site (directory available at [www.ket.org/ktn/](http://www.ket.org/ktn/)) to participate in programs originating from the center's Tech Forum Theater. Teachers receive kits containing lab materials for hands-on interaction plus program outlines, activity guides, vocabulary lists and other materials. Fees range from \$10 to \$150 for each hour-long program.

For details, visit [www.LouisvilleScience.org](http://www.LouisvilleScience.org) on the Internet or phone the center's distance learning coordinator toll free at (800) 591-2203, extension 6579.

- **"The World We Create"** - This traveling exhibition is a touchable tour of human inventions and applied science, engineering and technology. Its 10 fully interactive exhibit components

and graphic panels from the center's Construction Zone, Transit Hub and Tech Works present challenges that promote critical thinking, problem-solving skills and teamwork. This exhibit was funded by Gov. Paul Patton and the Kentucky General Assembly and by the National Science Foundation.

School districts and communities that are at least 100 miles from Louisville can bring the exhibition to a local

site and make its resources available for three weeks to K-12 students and others. The total cost for the exhibit is \$4,600, and the center provides information on how school districts can defray the cost through sponsorships, partnerships and small admission fees.

The center provides a technician to install and take down the exhibit; an educator/trainer to train teachers and volunteers to get the maximum benefit from the exhibit; exhibit-related distance learning opportunities; and support for publicizing the three-week visit.

For more information, visit [www.LouisvilleScience.org](http://www.LouisvilleScience.org) or call the traveling exhibits coordinator toll free at (800) 591-2203, extension 6009.



Photo Courtesy Louisville Science Center

**Students team up to build a 7-foot-high arch of foam blocks in a Louisville Science Center activity, then watch the blocks fly during the dismantling process.**

### Sign up by Jan. 16 for the zoo's Kids and Conservation Program

The Louisville Zoo's Gorilla Forest exhibit will open on May 23, 2002, and now is the time to sign up to participate in a program designed to teach students about the Western lowland gorillas and Pygmy hippos that will be living there.

The zoo's Kids and Conservation Program involves students in learning about the animals, their care and the need to conserve their native habitat: the forests in west Equatorial Africa. Students can also learn about the design and construction of the new exhibit and the human training required to care for the endangered primates.

Classes may adopt one of the animals and receive special rewards and exhibit recognition. However, adoption is not a requirement to receive the program's colorful, informative and free educational resources.

To request details and materials or sign up for a behind-the-scenes-tour and teacher training program, contact Linda Breedlove by Jan. 18, 2002, at [Lindabreedlove@home.com](mailto:Lindabreedlove@home.com) or (502) 426-0148.

## 'Adopt-A-Classroom' helps teachers buy materials

According to national sources, teachers spend an average of \$408 out-of-pocket per year for materials they want their students to have at school. If you are one of those teachers, you may want to know about Adopt-A-Classroom.

This program links private-sector contributions to classrooms that need an extra boost to get the materials they need. Here's how it works: Teachers go online at [www.adoptaclassroom.com](http://www.adoptaclassroom.com) to get details and register their classrooms as "adoptable." On the same site, individuals and businesses register and commit to \$500 tax-deductible contributions, even specifying certain classrooms if they choose. The program matches classrooms to individual or business "adopters," preferably those geographically close by.

Teachers and students get to know their new partners through e-mails or visits, and those who adopt receive information about their adopted classrooms plus itemized invoices detailing what their donations have purchased.

Because the program receives support from foundations, businesses and individuals, the adopted classrooms get the full purchase power of the \$500 contributions.

To participate in Adopt-A-Classroom, a teacher must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Must teach at a U.S. public school established before Aug. 15, 2001;
- Must have a valid e-mail address.

For more information, visit [www.adoptaclassroom.com](http://www.adoptaclassroom.com) on the Internet or contact Adopt-A-Classroom, 1521 Alton Road, #78, Miami, FL 33139; phone (305) 674-4470; fax (305) 674-0665; [info@adoptaclassroom.com](mailto:info@adoptaclassroom.com).

## The Halls of Learning

**Student Vanessa Walton describes daily 5th-grade activities at Longest Elementary to intent listener Carolyn Witt Jones, director of the Partnership for Kentucky Schools. Jones is one of several state-level education leaders on a "Learning Talks Tour" of public schools that have met their performance goals for the last four state assessment cycles. The state leaders join as many as 40 local community and business leaders at each school to applaud the school's success, get a sense of the strategies behind that success, and strengthen school-community connections.**

**Longest in Muhlenberg County was the first stop on the Learning Talks tour, which will end on Jan. 23, 2002 with a visit to Walton-Verona High. Other schools on the itinerary are Leslie County's Hayes Lewis Elementary, Glasgow Independent's Happy Valley Elementary, Jackson County's McKee Elementary, Boyd County's Catlettsburg Elementary, Anderson County's Western Elementary and Jefferson County's Butler High School. (Photo by Rick McComb)**



Photo by Rick McComb

# The Bulletin Board

By Joy Barr  
Kentucky Department of Education

## Redesign makes USDE's Web site easier to use

The U.S. Department of Education has redesigned its Web site to make department information and resources available and understandable to every user. To view the new site, go to [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov).

## Learn about Japan through Toyota International Teacher Program

The Toyota International Teacher Program will select a total of 50 teachers from seven states, including Kentucky, to go to Japan June 20 - July 5, 2002, to learn about the country's history, education, environment and technology and how they affect industry and society.

Full-time secondary teachers with at least three years of teaching experience may apply by Jan. 14, 2002. Applications are available online at [www.iie.org/pgms/toyota](http://www.iie.org/pgms/toyota).

For more information or printed application forms, contact Toyota International Teacher Program, Institute of International Education, 1400 K St. NW, Suite 650, Washington, DC 20005-2403; (877) TEACHJP; [toyotateach@iie.org](mailto:toyotateach@iie.org).

## Prichard Committee offers free parent/citizen guide

"Kentucky School Update: A Parent/Citizen Guide for 2001-2002," a publication of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, provides information on Kentucky's education system. Download the guide free of charge at [www.prichardcommittee.org](http://www.prichardcommittee.org).

## Training available on integrating economics into the classroom

The Kentucky Council on Economic Education offers schools a six-hour staff development program on integrating economics across the school curriculum. The program's three sessions cover understanding and teaching grade-appropriate economics concepts, high-quality K-12 curriculum, and consolidated planning strategies for including economics in a schoolwide instructional plan.

For more information, contact Jan Mester at the Kentucky Council on Economic Education at [jan@econky.win.net](mailto:jan@econky.win.net).

## Web site helps teach nutrition

The Food and Nutrition Information Center of the National Agricultural Library has a Web site for teachers to use in teaching nutrition. The site contains current information on the connection between nutrition and learning plus activities and ideas for science fair projects. Visit [www.nal.usda.gov/fnic](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic).

## Department offers new WebQuest on flag etiquette

The recent surge of patriotism underscores the value of knowing the proper way to display the American flag. The Kentucky Department of Education has posted a new WebQuest resource teachers and students can use to discover facts about flag etiquette.

The WebQuests are available for three grade levels:

High school: [www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag\\_HS.asp](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag_HS.asp)

Middle school: [www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag\\_ML.asp](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag_ML.asp)

Elementary school: [www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag\\_Ele.asp](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/oapd/curric/Quest/Flag_Ele.asp)

For more information, contact Robin Chandler or Marcia Lile at (502) 564-2106, or [rhandler@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:rhandler@kde.state.ky.us) or [mlile@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:mlile@kde.state.ky.us).

## KVHS announces calendar for next three semesters

The Kentucky Virtual High School has announced the following dates for the next three semesters:

### Spring 2002

Registration: now through Jan. 18

Classes Begin: Jan. 7

Last Day to Drop a Class: Feb. 4

Classes End: May 31

### Summer 2002

Registration: March 11 - June 14

Classes Begin: June 10

Last Day to Drop a Class: June 19

Classes End: Aug. 2

### Fall 2002

Registration: March 11 - Aug. 30

Classes Begin: Aug. 12

Last Day to Drop a Class: Sept. 13

Classes End: Dec. 20

For details about KVHS, check [www.kvhs.org](http://www.kvhs.org) on the Internet or contact Terri DeYong at (866)432-0008 (a toll-free number) or [tdeyong@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:tdeyong@kde.state.ky.us).

## Check online calendar for scheduled events

Want to know what's happening when? Visit the Department of Education's Master Calendar of Events on the Internet. The calendar makes it easy for educators and the general public to keep track of important professional development opportunities, conferences and other events.

To use the calendar, go to the department's home page ([www.kentuckyschools.org](http://www.kentuckyschools.org)) and click on "Calendar of Events" or go directly to [www.kentuckyschools.org/mastercalendar](http://www.kentuckyschools.org/mastercalendar).

For more information about the calendar, contact Armando Arrastia at (502) 564-3421 or [aarrasti@kde.state.ky.us](mailto:aarrasti@kde.state.ky.us) (or through the KETS global e-mail list).

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# Kentucky Teacher

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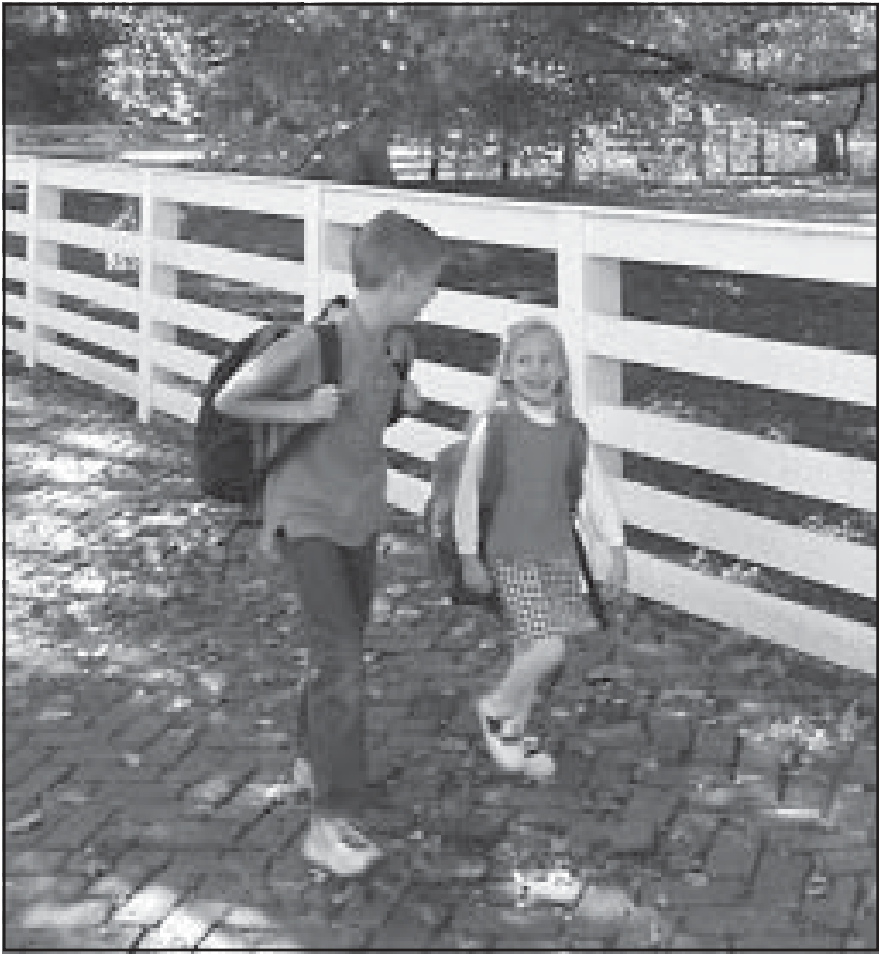


Photo by Rick McComb

**ON THEIR WAY** – Freddy and Kennedy Burch enjoy the fall colors as they walk past the grounds of Liberty Hall, a historic house museum in Frankfort. Freddy and Kennedy, who attend Franklin County's Hearn Elementary, are among more than 630,000 students enrolled in Kentucky public K-12 schools this year.

***“I know that teachers and schools cannot achieve this goal [of proficiency and beyond] on their own. They must have leadership and support from the district level. The more we delve into factors contributing to school successes and failures, the more we recognize how district-level actions – and inactions – contribute to school performance.”***

**Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit, on the importance of district-level administrators as instructional leaders. See Page 2.**

**Kentucky Department of Education**

Visit the Kentucky Department of Education's Web site: [www.kentuckyschools.org](http://www.kentuckyschools.org)